

In the Claims:

Kindly add Claim 26 as follows:

- 25/ 26. An apparatus for providing an automated system of record for automatically processing at least one negotiation between first and second users who are communicating over a network to each other negotiation terms that include a plurality of variables, comprising:
- a contract authority for assigning a unique identifier to such a negotiation;
 - a security program for validating that the terms stored for such a negotiation identified by the unique identifier have appropriate access controls and privilege safeguards; and
 - negotiations software configured to process such a negotiation by:
 - responding to and recognizing the first and second users as negotiators,
 - designating one of the users as a deciding entity;
 - receiving a negotiation term from one of the users;
 - analyzing the negotiation term to understand its purpose;
 - formatting the negotiation term according to the understood purpose;
 - placing the formatted negotiation term into a context supplied by at least one of the users;
 - indicating a detected change in a negotiation term to at least one of the users;

sending the negotiation term to one of the users;
storing the negotiation term; and
repeating the above processing until a signal is received from the deciding entity to
stop negotiations.

Kindly add Claim 27 as follows:

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~~26~~ 27. The apparatus of Claim ~~26~~, wherein the contract authority further comprises a
dynamic contract manager which incorporates security extensions into terms
proposed by each user.

Kindly add Claim 28 as follows:

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~~27~~ 28. The apparatus of Claim ~~27~~, wherein the security extensions further comprise
access control lists.

Kindly add Claim 29 as follows:

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~~28~~ 29. The apparatus of Claim ~~27~~, wherein the security extensions further comprise
privilege lists.

Kindly add Claim 30 as follows:

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~~29~~ 30. The apparatus of Claim ~~28~~, wherein the security program further comprises
validation programs to respond to requests for information associated with the

unique identifier.

Kindly add Claim 31 as follows:

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~~30~~ 31. The apparatus of Claim ~~26~~²⁵, wherein the contract authority further comprises a number generator which generates identifiers in such a way that it insures that the identifier will not be generated again within the system of record.

¹³⁵ [Kindly add Claim 32 as follows:

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~~31~~ 32. The apparatus of Claim ~~26~~²⁵, wherein the security program further comprises audit programs for insuring that a record of each attempted access to the automated system of record is stored in the automated system of record.

[Kindly add Claim 33 as follows:

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~~32~~ 33. The apparatus of Claim ~~26~~²⁵, wherein the contract authority enables a user to associate external data with terms stored in the automated system of record, thereby becoming a part of the automated system of record.

Kindly add Claim 34 as follows:

- 33/34. A method for providing an automated system of record for automatically processing at least one negotiation between first and second users who are communicating over a network to each other negotiation terms that include a plurality of variables, comprising the steps of:
- assigning a unique identifier, through a contact authority, to such a negotiation;
 - validating, through a security program, that the terms stored for such a negotiation identified by the unique identifier have appropriate access controls and privilege safeguards;
 - responding to and recognizing the first and second users as negotiators;
 - designating one of the users as a deciding entity;
 - receiving a negotiation term from one of the users;
 - analyzing the negotiation term to understand its purpose;
 - formatting the negotiation term according to the understood purpose;
 - placing the formatted negotiation term into a context supplied by at least one of the users;
 - indicating a detected change in a negotiation term to at least one of the users;
 - sending the negotiation term to one of the users;
 - storing the negotiation term; and
 - repeating the above steps until a signal is received from the deciding entity to

stop negotiations.

[Kindly add Claim 35 as follows:

³⁴35. The method of Claim ³³34, wherein the step of validating further comprises the step of incorporating security extensions into terms proposed by each user.

[Kindly add Claim 36 as follows:

³⁵36. The method of Claim ³⁴35, wherein the step of incorporating security extensions further comprises the step of including access control lists.

⁹⁵ [Kindly add Claim 37 as follows:

³⁶37. The method of Claim ³⁴35, wherein the step of incorporating security extensions further comprises the step of including privilege lists.

[Kindly add Claim 38 as follows:

³⁷38. The method of Claim ³³34, wherein the step of validating further comprises the step of using validation programs to respond to requests for information associated with the unique identifier.

[Kindly add Claim 39 as follows:

³⁸39. The method of Claim ³³34, wherein the step of assigning unique identifiers further

comprises the step of using a number generator which generates identifiers in such a way that it insures that the identifier will not be generated again within the system of record.

Kindly add Claim 40 as follows:

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39/40. The method of Claim ~~34~~³³, wherein the step of validating further comprises the step of insuring that a record of each attempted access to the automated system of record is stored in the automated system of record.

Kindly add Claim 41 as follows:

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40/41. The method of Claim ~~34~~³³, wherein the step of using a contract authority further comprises the step of enabling a user to associate external data with terms stored in the automated system of record, thereby becoming a part of the automated system of record.

Kindly add Claim 42 as follows:

41/42. An apparatus for storing in multiple repositories an automated system of record

for automatically processing at least one negotiation between first and second users who are communicating over a network to each other negotiation terms that include a plurality of variables, comprising:

a contract authority for assigning a unique identifier to such a negotiation;

a multiple repository manager for propagating data into multiple repositories using the unique identifier and for managing any updates which may apply to the multiple repositories; and

negotiations software configured to process such a negotiation by:

responding to and recognizing the first and second users as negotiators,

designating one of the users as a deciding entity;

receiving a negotiation term from one of the users;

analyzing the negotiation term to understand its purpose;

formatting the negotiation term according to the understood purpose;

placing the formatted negotiation term into a context supplied by at least one of the users;

indicating a detected change in a negotiation term to at least one of the users;

sending the negotiation term to one of the users;

storing the negotiation term; and

repeating the above processing until a signal is received from the deciding entity to stop negotiations.

Kindly add Claim 43 as follows:

~~42~~ 43. The apparatus of Claim ~~42~~⁴¹, wherein the multiple repository manager further comprises a contract central switch for transmitting information to multiple repositories appropriately.

Kindly add Claim 44 as follows:

~~43~~ 44. The apparatus of Claim ~~42~~⁴¹, wherein the multiple repository manager further comprises a contract router for communicating with the contract central switch.

Kindly add Claim 45 as follows:

~~44~~ 45. The apparatus of Claim ~~42~~⁴¹, wherein the multiple repository manager further comprises customizing features which can respond to a user request to maintain a copy of items from a negotiation that are relevant to that user in a local repository.

Kindly add Claim 46 as follows:

~~45~~ 46. A method for storing in multiple repositories an automated system of record for automatically processing at least one negotiation between first and second users who are communicating over a network to each other negotiation terms that include a

plurality of variables, comprising the steps of:

assigning, through a contract authority, a unique identifier to such a negotiation;

propagating data, through a multiple repository manager, into multiple repositories using the unique identifier and managing any updates which may apply to the multiple repositories;

responding to and recognizing the first and second users as negotiators,

designating one of the users as a deciding entity;

receiving a negotiation term from one of the users;

analyzing the negotiation term to understand its purpose;

formatting the negotiation term according to the understood purpose;

placing the formatted negotiation term into a context supplied by at least one of the users;

indicating a detected change in a negotiation term to at least one of the users;

sending the negotiation term to one of the users;

storing the negotiation term; and

repeating the above until a signal is received from the deciding entity to stop negotiations.

[Kindly add Claim 47 as follows:

46 47. The method of Claim 46, wherein the step of propagating data further comprises

the step of transmitting information to multiple repositories appropriately using a contract central switch.

Kindly add Claim 48 as follows:

47 ~~48~~. The method of Claim ~~46~~⁴⁵, wherein the step of propagating data further comprises the step of communicating with the contract central switch using a contract router.

Kindly add Claim 49 as follows:

BS 48 ~~49~~. The method of Claim ~~46~~⁴⁵, wherein the step of propagating data further comprises the step of responding to a user request to maintain a copy of items from a negotiation that are relevant to that user in a local repository.

Kindly add Claim 50 as follows:

49 ~~50~~. An apparatus for automatically processing at least one negotiation between first and second users who are communicating over a network to each other negotiation terms that include a plurality of variables, comprising:

negotiations software configured to process the negotiation by:

responding to and recognizing the first and second users as negotiators,

designating one of the users as a deciding entity;

receiving a negotiation term from one of the users;

analyzing the negotiation term to understand its purpose;

formatting the negotiation term according to the understood purpose;

placing the formatted negotiation term into a context supplied by at least one of the users;

indicating a detected change in a negotiation term to at least one of the users;

sending the negotiation term to one of the users;

storing the negotiation term; and

repeating the above processing until a signal is received from the deciding entity to stop negotiations.

Kindly add Claim 51 as follows:

~~50~~ ⁴⁹ 51. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software enables iterative bargaining about the terms proposed by the users.

Kindly add Claim 52 as follows:

~~51~~ ⁴⁹ 52. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software includes

international processing software which enables proposed terms to be selected from and processed in internationally accepted formats.

[Kindly add Claim 53 as follows:

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53. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software includes sponsorship software which enables the creation of a sponsored community with prescribed rules and procedures for users.

[Kindly add Claim 54 as follows:

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54. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein negotiations software includes remote website authoring software which enables a user to create a website remotely, using predefined templates.

[Kindly add Claim 55 as follows:

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55. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software includes sample quantity ordering software which allows a user to order and purchase a sample quantity for evaluation.

[Kindly add Claim 56 as follows:

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56. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software includes archival software for recording and retrieving each set of proposed terms to minimize the

risk that final terms can be repudiated later.

[Kindly add Claim 57 as follows:

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56 ~~57~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software includes integrated database software to store and retrieve terms proposed.

[Kindly add claim 58 as follows:

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57 ~~58~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software includes commercial transaction software for enabling commercial transactions over a network.

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[Kindly add Claim 59 as follows:

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58 ~~59~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software includes non-commercial transaction software for enabling non-commercial negotiations over a network.

[Kindly add Claim 60 as follows:

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59 ~~60~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software is physically located at a central site on a network.

[Kindly add Claim 61 as follows:

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60 ~~61~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software is physically located at a sponsor site on a network.

[Kindly add Claim 62 as follows:

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61 ~~62~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the negotiations software is physically located at a user's site on a network.

[Kindly add Claim 63 as follows:

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62 ~~63~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the network comprises an open public network.

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65 [Kindly add Claim 64 as follows:

63 ~~64~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the network comprises a private network.

[Kindly add Claim 65 as follows:

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64 ~~65~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the network comprises a virtual private network.

[Kindly add Claim 66 as follows:

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65 ~~66~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~, wherein the network comprises a local area network internal to an entity.

Kindly add Claim 67 as follows:

66 ~~67~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~⁴⁹, wherein the negotiations software can be used by a web browser.

Kindly add Claim 68 as follows:

67 ~~68~~. The apparatus of claim ~~50~~⁴⁹, wherein a user may include multimedia equipment capable of capturing additional content for inclusion in the terms.

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Kindly add Claim 69 as follows:

68 ~~69~~. A method for automatically processing negotiations between first and second users who communicate to each other negotiation terms that include a plurality of variables, the method comprising the following steps:

establishing a communications path over a network;

responding to and recognizing the first and second users as negotiators;

designating one of the users as a deciding entity;

receiving a negotiation term from one of the users;
 analyzing the negotiation term to understand its purpose;
 formatting the negotiation term according to the understood purpose;
 placing the formatted term into a context supplied by at least one of the users;
 indicating a detected change in a negotiation term to at least one of the users;
 sending the negotiation term to one of the users;
 storing the negotiation term; and
 repeating the above steps until a signal is received from the deciding entity to stop negotiations.

Kindly add Claim 70 as follows:

⁶⁵ ~~69~~ 70. The method of claim ~~69~~⁶⁸, wherein the step of responding further comprises the step of enabling iterative bargaining about the terms proposed by the users.

Kindly add Claim 71 as follows:

⁷⁰ ~~71~~ 71. The method of claim ~~69~~⁶⁸, wherein the step of analyzing further comprises the step of international processing to enable proposed terms to be selected from and processed in internationally accepted formats.

Kindly add Claim 72 as follows:

⁷¹ ~~72~~ 72. The method of claim ~~69~~⁶⁸, wherein the step of establishing a communications path

over a network further comprises the step of enabling the creation of a sponsored community with prescribed rules and procedures for users.

Kindly add Claim 73 as follows:

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73. The method of claim ~~69~~, wherein the step of establishing a communications path over a network further comprises the step of enabling a user to create a website remotely, using predefined templates.

Kindly add Claim 74 as follows:

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74. The method of claim ~~69~~, wherein the step of establishing a communications path over a network further comprises the step of allowing a user to order and purchase a sample quantity for evaluation.

Kindly add Claim 75 as follows:

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75. The method of claim ~~69~~, wherein the step of establishing a communications path over a network further comprises the step of enabling the recording and retrieval of each set of proposed terms from each user to minimize the risk that final terms can be repudiated later.

Kindly add Claim 76 as follows:

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76. The method of claim ~~69~~, wherein the step of establishing a communications path

over a network further comprises the step of including integrated database software to store and retrieve terms proposed.

Kindly add Claim 77 as follows:

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~~76~~ 77. The method of claim ~~69~~, wherein the step of analyzing further comprises the step of enabling commercial transactions over a network.

Kindly add Claim 78 as follows:

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~~77~~ 78. The method of claim ~~69~~, wherein the step of analyzing further comprises the step of enabling non-commercial negotiations over a network.

Kindly add Claim 79 as follows:

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~~78~~ 79. The method of claim ~~69~~, wherein the step of establishing a communications path over a network further comprises the step of physically locating negotiations at a central site on a network.

Kindly add Claim 80 as follows:

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~~79~~ 80. The method of claim ~~69~~, wherein the step of establishing a communications path over a network further comprises the step of physically locating negotiations at a sponsor site on a network.

Kindly add Claim 81 as follows:

80 81. The method of claim ~~69~~⁶⁸, wherein the step of establishing a communications path over a network further comprises the step of physically locating negotiations at a user's site on a network.

Kindly add Claim 82 as follows:

81 82. The method of claim ~~69~~⁶⁸, wherein the step of establishing a communications path over a network further comprises the step of using an open, public network.

Kindly add claim 83 as follows:

65 82 83. The method of claim ~~69~~⁶⁸, wherein the step of establishing a communications path over a network further comprises the step of using a private network.

Kindly add Claim 84 as follows:

83 84. The method of claim ~~69~~⁶⁸, wherein the step of establishing a communications path over a network further comprises the step of using a virtual private network.

Kindly add Claim 85 as follows:

84 85. The method of claim ~~69~~⁶⁸, wherein the step of establishing a communications path over a network further comprises the step of using a local area network internal to an entity.

Kindly add Claim 86 as follows:

85 ~~86~~⁶⁸. The method of claim ~~69~~⁶⁸, wherein the step of responding further comprises the step of enabling the use of a web browser.

Kindly add Claim 87 as follows:

86 ~~87~~⁶⁸. The method of claim ~~69~~⁶⁸, wherein the step of establishing a communications path further comprises the step of including multimedia equipment capable of capturing additional content for inclusion in the terms.

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Kindly add Claim 88 as follows:

87 ~~88~~. An apparatus for providing electronic non-repudiation for automatically processing at least one negotiation between first and second users who are communicating to each other over a secure communications path on a network negotiation terms that include a plurality of variables, comprising:

~~INCL~~ control software for providing controlled access to a secure storage space;
~~INCL~~ archiving software for storing terms in the secure storage space;
~~INCL~~ negotiations software communicating over the network and configured to

process the negotiation by:

responding to and recognizing the first and second users as negotiators,

designating one of the users as a deciding entity;

receiving a negotiation term from one of the users over the secure communications path;

decrypting the negotiation term;

analyzing the negotiation term to understand its purpose;

formatting the negotiation term according to the understood purpose;

placing the formatted negotiation term into a context supplied by at least one of the users;

indicating a detected change in a negotiation term to at least one of the users;

encrypting the negotiation term;

sending the negotiation term over the secure communications path to one of the users;

archiving the negotiation term in the secure storage space; and

repeating the above processing until a signal is received from the deciding entity to stop negotiations.

Kindly add Claim 89 as follows:

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~~88~~ 89. The apparatus of claim ~~88~~, wherein the control software further comprises

software for validating the identity of a user.

Kindly add Claim 90 as follows:

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90. The apparatus of claim ~~88~~, wherein the control software further comprises firewall security.

Kindly add Claim 91 as follows:

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91. The apparatus of claim ~~88~~, wherein the encrypting and decrypting of negotiation terms further comprises secure socket software.

Kindly add Claim 92 as follows:

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92. The apparatus of claim ~~88~~, wherein the encrypting and decrypting of negotiation terms further comprises public key encryption software.

Kindly add Claim 93 as follows:

93. A method for providing electronic non-repudiation for automatically processing at least one negotiation between first and second users who are communicating to each other negotiation terms that include a plurality of variables, comprising the

steps of:

establishing a secure communications path over a network;
responding to and recognizing the first and second users as negotiators,
designating one of the users as a deciding entity;
receiving a negotiation term from one of the users over the secure
communications path;
decrypting the negotiation term;
analyzing the negotiation term to understand its purpose;
formatting the negotiation term according to the understood purpose;
placing the formatted negotiation term into a context supplied by at least one
of the users;
indicating a detected change in a negotiation term to at least one of the users;
encrypting the negotiation term;
sending the negotiation term over the secure communications path to one
of the users;
archiving the negotiation term; and
repeating the above processing until a signal is received from the deciding entity to
stop negotiations.

Kindly add Claim 94 as follows:

93/ 94. The method of claim ~~93~~⁹² wherein the step of providing controlled access to a

secure storage space further comprises the step of validating the identity of a user.

Kindly add Claim 95 as follows:

⁹⁴ 95. The method of claim ⁹² 93 wherein the step of providing controlled access to a secure storage space further comprises the step of using firewall security.

Kindly add Claim 96 as follows:

⁹⁵ 96. The method of claim ⁹² 93 wherein the steps of encrypting and decrypting negotiation terms further comprises the step of using secure socket software.

Kindly add Claim 97 as follows:

⁹⁶ 97. The method of claim ⁹² 93 wherein the steps of encrypting and decrypting negotiation terms further comprises the step of using public key encryption software.

Kindly add Claim 98 as follows:

⁹⁷ 98. A machine readable medium for storing a system for automatically processing at least one negotiation between first and second users who are communicating over a network to each other negotiation terms that include a plurality of variables,

comprising:

negotiations software configured to process the negotiation by:

responding to and recognizing the first and second users as

negotiators,

designating one of the users as a deciding entity;

receiving a negotiation term from one of the users;

analyzing the negotiation term to understand its purpose;

formatting the negotiation term according to the understood purpose;

placing the formatted negotiation term into a context supplied by at

least one of the users;

indicating a detected change in a negotiation term to at least one of the

users;

sending the negotiation term to one of the users;

storing the negotiation term; and

repeating the above processing until a signal is received from the deciding entity to

stop negotiations.